Growth in Indian Exports

3545. SHRI RAMNARAYAN GOSWAMI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what would be the expected rate of growth in Indian exports, steadily sustained over a long period, to ensure that within a period of ten years the trade balance should turn positive and all the external debts are repaid within a period of 20 years; and

(b) what would be the expected composition of the export trade and its direction to make this possible?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Boosting exports is a key element of foreign trade strategy during the Eighth Plan period. The Eighth Plan envisages overall export growth of 13.6% per annum in volume terms, or at 1991-92 prices, during the Plan period, 1992-97. Exports and Imports, however, depend on both internal and external factors and it is difficult to be precise about the years when the trade balance will turn positive in the long-term future. A large part of India's external debt continues to be concessional with low interest rates and high maturity period and it may not be advisable to prepay but repay them as per the repayment schedule of each loan irrespective of growth of exports. Government has already prepaid IMF debt of $ 1.1 billion in April, 1994 and various options are being considered for prepaying high-cost external debt in order to reduce the debt service liability.

(b) The export-pattern is expected to move in the direction of manufactures notably of glass, rubber, coir; readymade garments; processed fruits & vegetables; handicrafts including gems and jewellery; engineering goods; woollen products; and chemical products; growth in respect of which has been projected more than overall export growth of the Eighth Plan. It is the policy of the Government to boost exports and diversify the same in terms of commodity and country coverage. Export promotion is a continuous and ongoing process and steps are taken to boost exports in consultation with trade, industry and export promotion organisations.

Higher prices demanded by small coffee growers

3546. SHRI AJIT P.K. JOGI:
SHRI RAM GOPAL YADAV:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to refer to the answers to Unstarred Question 787 and 817 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 1st August, 1994 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the maintenance of the Coffee Board has become expensive;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the small coffee growers have demanded higher price for their produce; and

(d) if so, the action taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) No, sir. However, the unit cost of marketing of coffee by the Board has marginally increased due to reduced quantity of coffee pooled with the Board.

(c) and (d) The payment to all coffee growers is based on actual realisation on sale of coffee, after deducting the marketing expenses. Hence question of higher prices to small growers does not arise.